

The Key and the Lock

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Summary: Jessie and Misty switch bodies. Jessie must find the truth to save Misty and herself before it's too late.

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As a side note, after Jessie and Misty switch bodies, I refer to them in the body they are in. For example, Jessie talking to Ash while in Misty's body would look like this: "Hi Ash!" said Misty. Got it?

Jessie sat on a rock. Where were they? She should have seen them by now. I better go look for them, she decided. As she stood up, a scream pierced the chilly air. Oh no! Her thoughts were on James as she ran through the forest. The only sounds she heard were her feet on the dry leaves and her breath. Her heart pounded as she raced towards the direction her friends had gone. Suddenly she tripped over a branch. Her head hit a rock as she fell, and the last thing she saw was the pok  ball in front of her.

She awoke with a throbbing headache in the middle of the forest. It was pitch black and the wind was picking up. Jessie stood up and brushed herself off. No one ever listens to me, she thought. I finally get a day off, and then they kick me out! They desert me for their own interests! Jessie looked down and saw the pok  ball in front of her. "I wonder who's this is?" she asked herself.

"Pok  ball, go!" she yelled. Out appeared arbok. "An arbok? This isn't mine! I wonder... Well, in you go." Arbok returned and Jessie turned to walk back to town.

"Jessie!" yelled James. "Where are you?"

"I bet she went lookin' fer us since we was late. We better go find her," replied Meowth.

"But it's so cold out! And I'm scared of the dark!" James whined. At that moment Jessie entered the clearing. "Jessie!"

Jessie looked around. She didn't see Jessie anywhere. "Where?" she asked James.

"You're Jessie! Don't you remember?" Jessie looked clueless. "We went out hunting for rare pok  mon and we split up..." explained James.

"I have no idea what you are talking about. I'm not Jessie, I'm Misty. You should know that by now," said Jessie.

"Misty? You aren't Misty! Unless I need glasses..."

"Oh yeah, here's an arbok I found. I think it's Jessie's," said Jessie.

"Oh... um, thanks...Misty." James took the pok  ball then whispered to Meowth, "What's wrong with her? It seems she's gone a little loopy."

"I think she has amnesia," Meowth whispered back. "We should get her to a doctor." Meowth looked around. "Hey! Where'd she go?"

"Brock, hey Brock!" yelled Jessie.

"Huh?" He turned around.

"Wait up!" Jessie said, running towards Brock and Ash.

"Jessie?" asked Brock.

"Why is everyone calling me Jessie?" asked Jessie, exasperated.

"Because you are Jessie?" replied Ash.

"Arg! I'm Misty! Why won't anyone believe me?"

"Uh...okay...Misty." Brock said carefully.

Meanwhile...

A shadowlike figure hovered over Misty's body. She didn't want to go in, but she felt something tugging her. "I don't belong there," she said aloud. No one heard her. The shadows around her just stared. They wouldn't let her leave. "I need to go," she tried again. One of the figures drifted forward.

"Jessica, it is time. People have suffered from you too long," the shadow said, unemotionally.

"Time for what? What does this have to do with that twerp?"

"We can't allow you to live as you are much longer. You're throwing off the equilibrium of the world."

Equilibrium? Isn't that something she learned in science? Maybe not. The dark shadows glided towards her like a magnet. She tried to run, but she couldn't. It felt like she was in a nightmare she couldn't wake up from. "James!" she shouted to the night.

"It's no use, child. He'll never hear you. Only those who face the truth can hear you."

"Then everybody should be able to!" Jessie said, defiantly.

"It's not that easy." She sensed a smile. "Everyone denies something. I can only give you this one piece of information- the key is in the lock. It just needs to be turned." The shadow turned away. "Pull her in."

"NOOOO!" Jessie shouted as she was pulled into Misty's body.

As the shadows dissolved into the night, Misty awoke.

"We should go search for Jessie. I'm gettin' worried 'bout her," said Meowth.

"You're right. She was acting strange, even for her."

"If she's normally strange, what are you? Mentally ill?"

"Shut up, Meowth! This is no time for jokes!"

"Okay, okay! Let's just get goin'!"

"Hey Ash! Where ya going?" Brock yelled to Ash. Ash stopped.

"This whole Jessie/Misty thing is odd. There's an old lady in town who's supposed to be an oracle. She might be able to help."

"Does she have a beautiful assistant?"

"NO!" Ash yelled, then calmed down. "Someone needs to stay with Jessie. I'm going alone. C'mon, Pikachu." Pikachu jumped up onto his shoulder. Brock turned towards Jessie as Ash ran off into the night.

"Great, just great. I'm here alone with a sleeping woman and she happens to be Jessie of Team Rocket! If only she was Nurse Joy..." Brock slouched as he thought of all the beautiful single women he knew. "Officer Jenny of Viridian City, Nurse Joy of Viridian City..."

"Jessie of Team Rocket." Brock looked up. There stood Misty. He quickly glanced at the sleeping Jessie. "I need to borrow her for awhile."

"What? Misty, are you feeling okay?"

"No, I am not feeling all right. I have this splitting headache, I saw some ghosts, and I'm not Misty! I'm sick of this!" Misty pulled out a giant bazooka. "Hand over Misty and you won't get hurt."

"Hmm. You must mean Jessie, or "Misty" should I say?"

"IT DOESN'T MATTER! JUST HAND THE GIRL OVER!"

"No. Here's Togepi instead." Brock handed Togepi to Misty.

"That's it. You're toast." Misty dropped Togepi. She aimed at Brock and pulled the trigger.

"What was that?" asked Meowth.

"I dunno. Let's go see." The twosome ran through the forest until they came upon a clearing full of smoke. When it cleared, they saw Brock lying on the ground with a giant hole in his chest. James knelt by Brock.

"Is he dead?" he asked. Meowth didn't even check.

"James, do ya think he could survive a blow that big? His heart has been blown to smithereens!"

"Who could have done this?"

"There's only one person with a gun big enough to do this kind of damage- Jessie." Meowth stared to dig a hole.

"Well, at least we know she was here. I can't believe she'd do this, though." James stared off into space in a state of shock.

"James, have ya gone brain dead? Of course she'd do this! Do you think she never means to hit you all the time? Of course not! All she is is a rotten liar!"

"She is not!"

"You're just too love sick to see it, but it's true!"

"It takes two to speak the truth- one to speak and another to hear."

"Who said dat?"

"I did. When love swears that she is made of truth, I do believe her, though I know she lies. James." A shadowy figure held out a flower to James. It was the same figure that Jessie had seen earlier. James took the flower. "Remember what I have said. When you admit this to yourself, you can save Jessica." He faded into the darkness.

"What was dat all about?"

"I don't know. I don't know," James said as he stared at the white

flower in his hand.

"I'm goin' ta bed."

James sat down against a log to think about the mysterious figure. '...All she is is a rotten liar!' '...When my love swears that she is made of truth, I do believe her...' The figure had said to remember that. He had also said 'it takes two to speak the truth- one to speak and another to hear.' James knew Meowth was right- Jessie WAS sometimes a liar. He thought about it some more.

"When my love swears... That's it! I love her! Meowth was right again- I'm too love sick to see the truth. I guess it DID need two to speak the truth." Suddenly the flower in James' hands started glowing. "Huh? What's this?" Soon it grew so bright that James had to drop it to shield his eyes. The flower shot up into the sky in Jessie's direction...

"Well done, child. I disapprove of murder, though."

Misty looked up. The shadow was back.

"What are you talking about?" She still couldn't figure out the lock and key thing.

"Here. You'll need this." He handed her the glowing rose that had just fallen. Then he disappeared again.

Misty looked at Jessie, who was bound and gagged. How was she going to get her body back? She had tried everything she could think of, and nothing was working.

"It's got to be in the riddle. 'The key is in the lock, it just needs to be turned'. What the heck does that mean?"

"Come in, come in child," an old voice called out.

"I guess this is the place, Pikachu," Ash said to his friend.

"Pika!" Pikachu followed Ash into the dimly lit store. The beads hanging from the door clicked as Ash moved them aside. An old man (not a woman!) sat at a round table covered by a cloth of many colors. A crystal ball rested on a stand.

"Please, sit down." He motioned to an empty chair.

"Hey mister! Have you ever seen 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream coat?'" Ash asked.

"No, why?" the man responded, a bit surprised.

"Well, your table cloth matches his coat!"

"It's not a table cloth! It's a 'mystical fabric'. Now, why are you here?"

"Shouldn't you know? You are psychic, right? And aren't psychics usually ugly, old women?" The man put his hand behind his head like they do whenever embarrassed.

"Well..." Suddenly the old man's beard fell off into the coffee in front of him. "Whoops..." "Hey! You aren't a psychic! You're Professor Oak!"

It was dawn when James and Meowth finally reached the clearing where Misty and Jessie were.

"I didn't know a rose could fly so fast!" exclaimed James, as he fell, exhausted.

"I didn't know a rose could fly at all," replied Meowth. "Anyway, there's Jessie. Let's grab her before Misty wakes up." Meowth pulled out a deflated balloon and a pump.

"Where'd you get that?" asked James.

"If Jessie's allowed ta have mallet space, ain't I allowed ta have balloon space?" Meowth fury swiped James. "Now shad up already and get Jessie into da balloon."

In no time at all, the reunited Team Rocket floated away.

Meanwhile...

Misty turned over and threw an arm into the campfire. "OW!!!!!!!" she yelled, jumping into the air. "Who forgot to put the fire out? James!" She quickly looked around, then realized the truth. "Oh yeah! It was me! Whoops!" Misty was about to fall back asleep when she realized Jessie was missing.

"Why, that no good... How'd she get free?" A furious Misty ran off into the woods.

Brock opened his eyes and found himself in a heavenly place. There were birds and animals everywhere in the lush landscape. He felt like he was in one of Monet's paintings. That wasn't the best part, though. As far as Brock could see there were attractive women everywhere! They were talking and milling around, playing sports, battling pokÃ©mon, and so on. The odd thing was, there was a shadow in the middle of it. It started to waft towards Brock.

"Ah! Get away from me!" yelled Brock. The shadow stared at him, and he was unable to move. "What'd you do?"

"Brock Slate. You are in Heaven." Brock opened his mouth to say something. "Wait. I'm sorry you're here. This was not supposed to happen, but there's nothing I can do. All I can say is, enjoy yourself." The mist-like figure started to float away.

"Hey! Wait!" The shadow turned. "Can you at least explain to me what was supposed to happen and why I'm dead?"

The figure sighed. "Sit down at this rock. I'll explain everything."

"Hey Brock! Where are ya?" called Ash as he entered the campsite. There was a smoldering fire and the supplies were still intact, but there was no sign of life. Ash and Pikachu walked further into the clearing. Suddenly the ground gave way and Ash and Pikachu fell into a hole.

"What the? Team Rocket must be responsible for this!"

"Pika!"

"What Pikachu? Are you saying we aren't alone?"

"Cha!" Ash looked around.

"I don't see anyone." Then he looked down. Brock's body yelled out 'I'm dead!' underneath him. "AHHH!!!" Ash scrambled up the dirt wall to no avail.

Meanwhile...

James and Meowth were in the balloon discussing what to do with Jessie.

"We should undo her gag and binding," said James.

"Are ya nuts? She'd kill us for sure once she got her memory back! Once we get it back she won't be able ta hurt us because she'd be tied!"

"Good plan. Do you want the honors?"

"Sure." Meowth grabbed one of Jessie's paper fans and started whacking her with it. "WAKE UP! YOU'RE JESSIE!"

"Do you think she remembers yet?"

"I dunno. I'll do it again." After a few more whacks and a few rounds of fury swipes, they decided she remembered.

They took off her bindings and gag and Jessie yelled out, "I'M MISTY, YOU FOOLS!" They quickly struggled to bind and gag her again. It ended with James and Meowth getting bound and gagged. "Now how do we land this thing? I know!" She grabbed Meowth and made him poke a hole in the balloon with his claws. The balloon let out a great whoosh of air and eventually landed in a clearing. It just so happens that this was the same clearing that Brock, well, you know. I won't bring back any painful memories.

Jessie stepped out of the balloon and immediately fell into the hole Ash was in. Luckily, half of the balloon was also in, so she could climb out. Before she could, a hand grabbed her ankle.

"What's that? Who's there?"

"Jessie," came a groan. "Please...help me."

"That sounds like Ash," Jessie said, completely missing the fact that she had been called Jessie for the billionth time today. "Ash, are you there?"

"Yeah," came the groan again. "Pika...chu... is here... too," Ash said, struggling for air.

"Why do you sound do out of breath? And where are you? I don't see you anywhere!"

"I'm... under...neath... you..."

Jessie looked down. "Whoops." She quickly jumped off and also noticed a body under Ash and Pikachu. "Who's that under you?"

Ash got up and took a few gulps of air before answering. "It's Brock," he said, in a low voice.

"WHAT? HE CAN'T DIE!"

"Why not? Isn't that strange behavior for a member of Team Rocket?"

"Never mind that," Jessie said, holding back tears. "Let's get out of here." She handed Ash the dangling balloon, and soon all three were out. A muffled sound came from the balloon and Ash went to investigate as Jessie, possessed by Misty, dug a proper grave for Brock.

"Uh, Jessie?" asked Ash.

"Mm-hm?" Jessie responded, again missing the mistaken name.

"Why are James and Meowth all tied up?"

"Well... they were getting annoying."

"Man. This is almost as strange as Misty thinking she was Jessie," Ash said to himself. Jessie perked up.

"What was that you were saying?"

"Well, I was just saying how you and Misty are both acting strange."

"Really? And how was Misty acting different?"

"Well, she kept insisting on being called Jessie and, well, it kinda scares me."

Meanwhile, Misty was trying to find Jessie. Not knowing where to go, she ran to the infamous clearing everybody's always in.

"Jessie!" Jessie yelled.

"Misty." Misty said calmly.

"What the?" asked Ash.

"Shall we dispose of him?"

"Not! just put him in the basket of the balloon."

"Very well." Misty tied up Ash and Pikachu and put them with James and Meowth. "Now, let's get this over with. Give me my body!"

"I would if I could, but I don't know how."

"Well, then I'll just have to force you!"

"WAIT!"

Misty whirled around. "Not you again!"

"Yes, it's me. This isn't the proper way. Are you not listening to me at all?"

"Yes, I know. The key is in the lock, blah, blah, blah."

"What's going on?" Ash whispered to James, after getting his gag off.

"I don't know. Sounds awfully strange, though," replied James.

"Misty Waterflower, I'm sorry to bring you into this. It just had to be done." Misty nodded to the black shadow. "Now, Jessica, since you haven't listened, I'm not going to help you anymore. You have five minutes to save yourself, or you will be in that body forever." Misty paled, then soon blacked out.

Jessie, in her own form, was standing before a large door with a key in it. Fog swirled about her.

"I must be dreaming if I'm in my own body."

"Five minutes, Jessica," echoed the shadow's voice.

"Oh yeah! I better hurry and think! The key is in the lock, it just needs to be turned. Well, here goes!" Jessie walked up to the door and attempted to turn the key. "It won't budge! Oh no! Now what?"

"Three minutes."

"Shoot! Think, Jessie, think!" Suddenly James appeared. "James! Help me!" He looked straight ahead at the rose in Jessie's hand. She looked at it. "This wasn't here before..."

"Two minutes."

As she stared at the flower, she was reminded of all the sweet things James had done for her. Yet, she was always so cruel to him.

"One minute."

"I love you, Jessie."

Jessie's head sprang up. "What?"

"I love you." Jessie blushed.

"Thirty seconds."

A river of feelings flowed up in her mind as she thought about James. Finally, she saw only one truth.

"Twenty seconds."

"I love you too," she whispered. The key began to turn.

"What?" James asked.

"I LOVE YOU TOO!" Jessie shouted with all her might. The key turned completely and the door sprang open with one second to spare.

Jessie sat on a rock. Where were they? She should have seen them by now. I better go look for them, she decided. She stood up and calmly walked towards town. The sun shone, and she felt her spirits raised as she saw James and Meowth walking towards her.

"James!" she called.

"Sorry we're late!" James replied, cowering in fear of a fan or mallet.

"No problem. I didn't mind."

"Really?" James straightened up and the threesome walked to the balloon. It was going to be a good day, thought Jessie.

"Brock, hey Brock!" yelled Misty.

"Huh?" He turned around.

"Wait up!" Misty called, running towards Brock and Ash.

"Misty!"

"I almost thought you'd go on without me!"

"We wouldn't do that."

"That's good."

"What took you so long in the bathroom, anyway?" asked Ash.

"None of your business!" Misty screamed at Ash.

"Okay, okay!"

End

file.